

From the Commander

By Pete Krawitz



As discussed during our March business meeting, I recently had the privilege of meeting with Arni Thomson and Brian Dodd, from Ballard Elks Lodge 827. Brian and Arni are working on a very ambitious

project in hopes to pay tribute to some of the 4.7 million U.S. service members that served in WWI. Arni and Brian are embarking on a journey to catalog the names and burial sites of any known WWI veterans. Don't we have a government agency for that? Well, I was surprised to learn that there isn't an official list of U.S. service members who lost their lives in WWI. Additionally, finding said service information from the U.S. National Personnel Records agency is extremely difficult, if not impossible. A large amount of WWI veteran records were lost in the 1973 fire at the U.S. National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis.

November 11, 2018, will mark the 100th Anniversary of the end of World War I (WWI). As many of you know, Ballard-Eagleson Post 3063 was named to honor local UW alum, Lt. James Eagleson, of the US Army's 69th Coast Artillery Corps. Nearly 5 million Americans served in WWI with approximately, 116,516 never making it home. Lt Eagleson was one of those 116,516. He died of Pneumonia on his journey back from France. Sadly, just as many service members succumbed to disease during and shortly after the war (~63,114) compared to actual combat (~53,402). It's sad to think that some of

these names have been forgotten in many hometowns across America. This is where Brian and Arni have stepped in.

So far, Arni and Brian have walked through Ft. Lawton Cemetery and photographed 135 headstones identifying WWI veterans, and they have created an alphabetized database with date of birth, date of death, branch of service and designation of WWI service. They have also embarked on similar activities at private and public cemeteries in Alaska.

There are a few other cemeteries in the Seattle Area that Arni and Brian would like to survey. This is a big undertaking. As such, they have reached out to Post 3063 to see if we would be interested in assisting with this project. Ultimately, Brian and Arni would like to add to the database and eventually provide it to the WWI Centennial Commission. They hope that the idea will catch on and other VFW posts will join in and help spread the word.

I'm very inspired by what Arni and Brian are trying to do and would very much like to assist them in any way we can. Perhaps we can even consider a joint project with Boy Scout Troop 80? We will be talking about this project some more during our April business meeting. If you have any interest in this project and would like to lead or assist in some way, please come on out to the meeting on Thursday, April 5 at 7 p.m. Alternatively, please send me an e-mail to commander@vfwseattle.org.

Yours in Comradeship

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Quartermaster's Update

By Harold Rodenberger



Every year we observe milestones along the way to a new VFW

year. Last month we had first nominations for office. During the business meeting later this week we will elect officers for the coming year. During the May meeting, those officers will be installed. After the new State Commander is installed near the end of our annual state convention, our new officers will take on their new roles and the new VFW year will begin.

As the days grow longer and the weather warms, we will be scheduling flag retirement ceremonies, shredder truck visits and cleanup days around our post. Memorial Day is coming and with it we will have our usual Buddy Poppy distribution teams working around our neighborhood. Every year we participate in the

Memorial Day celebrations at local cemeteries. Please let one of our officers or myself know if you would like to join in any of these events.

All year, but especially as our year draws down, we are reminded that new members are critical to the life of our post. Every year we lose some who pass on to their reward, those who move to different parts of the country and others who simply move on to other pursuits and let their memberships lapse. For our post to replace those losses and grow we need to replace the losses and generate a few extra for good measure.

Please see if you can find a new member among your friends and acquaintances. Sometimes all it takes is to ask a potential new member to join. The critical part is asking. If they aren't asked most people will never join.

They call it "March

Madness" but the participating teams can't be mad. They must be talented and skillful at what they do but, at this level, they also must be well disciplined team players who share a goal and work hard to achieve that goal. Every year, it seems that we hear about less talented teams winning because they play better as a TEAM.

Just like a basketball team, a successful VFW Post survives on teamwork. It takes many people doing their part for any post to thrive. Our post is blessed with many hard working volunteers who fill the officer positions and others who serve on committees, help with the Honor/Color Guard, help with hall setup and cleanup and otherwise play key roles on our team.

Here's a big **Thank You** to those who help make the train run and the post grow.

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This newsletter is published quarterly and submissions must be received by the editor five days before the last day of a quarter for inclusion in the next quarter's issue. We reserve the right to edit submitted articles for timeliness, clarity, and syntax. Be aware that newsletter images and/or text appearing on the website may be shared by readers.

Commander: Pete Krawitz

Sr Vice Commander: Joe Tiffany

Jr Vice Commander: Joe Fitzgerald

Quartermaster: Harold Rodenberger

Adjutant: Alyson Teeter

Judge Advocate: Norm Limric

Chaplain: Bill Griffith

Surgeon: Dan Stokke

Officer of the Day: Vacant

3-Year Trustee: Russ Seelig

2-Year Trustee: Aaron Stoltz

1-Year Trustee: James Williams

Service Officer: Gail Engler

Guard: Vacant

Newsletter Editor: Alyson Teeter

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We're on the web and Facebook!

<http://www.vfwseattle.org>

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Tiny House Homeless Encampment Moves to Northlake



Nickelsville Ballard – the tiny house homeless encampment located next to Post 3063's parking lot – relocated to a new site in Northlake March 13-14, 2018.

As pictured left, the lot has been completely cleared out. The city has returned it to Seattle City Light.

According to MyBallard.com, the original November move was delayed because the Northlake site was not ready.

Auxiliary President Recognizes District, State Officers

By Donna Limric

The members of the Post 3063 Auxiliary are working hard to rebuild our organization. Our goal is to become strong and active. We now have a business license for the auxiliary, so we are recognized by the state! Thank you to our treasurer Liz Guncay for all your hard work!

I would like to recognize the help from auxiliary members outside our post. First a huge thank you to District 2 Auxiliary President Lois Mezek. Louis has been to every meeting, and there by phone and e-mail with whatever we need. She has been guiding us every step of the way. The following individuals have

also been of great help: State Jr. Vice President Kathi Naff, State Conductress Barbara Moore, and State President Laurie Lukas. Finally, the post itself has been enthusiastically encouraging us while affording us the space to get back on our feet.

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



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Our Auxiliary's first event will be a Book sale on May 5-6. The hours will be announced very soon. We will have fliers and post the hours on our Facebook page. This will be the same weekend as the Grand Opening weekend of the Nordic Museum. Please come down and explore what we have to offer. The proceeds from the book sale will benefit the Heroes in the Ballpark fund.



Tips From the Post Service Officer: Documentation Key!

By Gail Engler

As Ballard Eagleson Post 3063 Service Officer I am here to educate and inform veterans and their family members about their benefits, assist them in requesting military records, and submitting applications for benefits such as for disability, compensation and burial benefits. I can also provide a resource or referral for additional needs. Since I am not an accredited service officer, I cannot sign off on the forms as a veteran service organization (VSO) representative or submit the claim.

I can, however, help you request military records and obtain and complete the correct forms for submission to the VA. Claims are submitted by accredited VSOs located on the 10th floor of the Jackson Federal building at 915 2nd Avenue, Seattle. Any of the VSOs at the VFW, DAV, VVA and American Legion can submit a claim to the VA. An accredited VSO will review and submit the claim, and make sure it is well documented and that you have a fully developed claim. This ensures that your packet is not returned for minor things such as missing or incomplete form or missing documents. They can also track your claim once it is submitted to the VA.

An important part of submitting a claim, especially for a service connected disability claim, is having all the required documentation prior to meeting with the service officer. Do you have a copy of your discharge papers from the service (DD 214 or equivalent) and your medical records from military service (which may document a service connected injury)? Do you have civilian medical records from your physician or other civilian medical professionals that further supports a service connected injury or illness?

Military discharge papers, personnel and medical records can be requested online by going to the VA website (<http://www.va.gov>) and completing an SF 180. Depending on your branch of service and when you served will determine where you send the request. If you do not have your discharge papers, do not procrastinate in getting a copy of it because it provides proof of eligibility for your veteran's benefits. Your spouse and/or family

members or Power of Attorney should also know where you keep this important document.

Another important thing for veterans to keep in mind is making sure their loved ones are taken care of and that they know what benefits they are eligible for when the veteran passes away. For instance, if a veteran has filed a disability claim with the VA and passes away before the claim has been approved or disapproved, a "substitution of claimant" can be submitted that allows the VA to process the claim that was filed before the veteran's death.

Also, the veteran's widow is not automatically entitled to the veteran's disability check. They must apply for a survivor's pension, which is based on the veteran's wartime service and must meet the income threshold of \$80,000 in assets. The primary residence is not included but checking/savings accounts, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and real property are included. Some expenses, such as unreimbursed medical expenses, may reduce your countable income. The VA will determine if there are any accrued benefits to be paid to the surviving spouse.

If a veteran is age 85 or older, or if the veteran has a terminal diagnosis, a request for the claim to be expedited will be included. A surviving spouse may also be eligible for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) if the veteran died from service connected disability (SCD) or the SCD contributed to their death. The SCD must be listed on the death certificate.

It may seem overwhelming to file a claim or you may think you are not eligible for any benefits but it is important to discuss this with a service officer and get their assistance in filing a fully developed claim. The VA must then do their due diligence to determine the eligibility of the claim. The claim process can take months but it may be worth your time.

I can be reached at serviceofficer@vfwseattle.org to set up an appointment to meet with you.



Information Resources for Members, From Newbies to Old Timers

By Alyson M. Teeter

When I took on the job as post adjutant last year, I didn't know what the job entailed besides taking business meeting notes and periodically emailing the post. Eventually I read a job description that said, "The Post Adjutant is a conduit for information between the Post Commander and the members of the Post, as well as between the Post and the general public. Effective communication skills are necessary to maintain a productive harmonious atmosphere among members and help to recruit new members."

Whew, that can mean a lot or a little, since communication can be put to the wayside in our fast moving, noisy lives.

On that note, the leadership team is working to streamline and improve communication processes for the post in order to enhance retention, membership participation, continuity, and recruitment. Here's an overview of what's we've been up to.

- **Website:** The post's official page at <http://vfwseattle.org/> was revamped in the past couple years and it's a resource for Post 3063 members. You can also use it for recruiting or for hall rentals.
- The **post's Google Calendar** is available at <http://vfwseattle.org/index.php/resources/event-calendar/>. You can add this calendar to your own calendaring system if you want to know what's going on with the post. The hall rental calendar is also posted on the website.
- **Submit meeting agenda items** at <http://vfwseattle.org/index.php/resources/meeting-agenda-item-submission-form/>.
- Do you volunteer, fly a flag, recycle, give blood, donate goods to charity, or any other activities that improve the community? The

VFW wants to know this information! **Submit community service info** to <http://vfwseattle.org/index.php/resources/community-service-reporting/>.

- **Facebook:** Our business meetings and social nights are posted as events on our page at <https://www.facebook.com/vfwpost3063>. Here we also share veteran-related news to our followers.
- **Newsletters:** Look for our monthly e-newsletter in your email inbox and quarterly newsletter in the mail. If your contact information changes, please notify me at adjutant@vfwseattle.org.
- **Email Lists:** Post 3063 has two email lists that publicize benefits and volunteer opportunities. Please let me know if you'd like to be included on these lists. After I add your name, click on the confirmation email from Zoho.com to join.

I'm just a conduit for information, so if there's anything you'd ever like to pass along to the rest of the post, please share and we'll see what's the best channel for relaying your information. I also appreciate feedback so let me know if you have any ideas or suggestions for improving the post's communication processes.

New Member Spotlight

Kieran Bessert was a U.S. Navy submariner and has five Strategic Deterrence Patrol awards. He is also currently interning at the post, so if you see him in the office, be sure to say hi!





Mid-Winter Conference Provides Training and Inspiration

By Harold Rodenberger

Along with four other delegates from our post, I attended this year's Mid-Winter Conference held in Spokane Jan. 19-20, 2018.

Friday morning Gail Engler, the Post 3063 Service Officer, Joe Fitzgerald, the Post 3063 Junior Vice Commander, and I attended the Service Officer's training presented by our new Department of Washington VSO, Bill Brown. Bill gave a comprehensive class covering forms, procedures and available resources.

Next on the agenda was the Quartermaster's Class presented by our new Department Quartermaster, Paul Manley. Paul covered some of the finer points of quartermaster's duties and answered lots of questions for post quartermasters and other interested people in attendance.

To wrap up the day, I attended Nadine Warren's very informative and motivating Recruiting Class. Nadine is a great speaker. She showed slides and

gave examples of the various techniques to get those all-important younger veterans to join our ranks.

Saturday we attended the business session. It was a busy day with remarks by the VFW National Representative, Bob Wallace, and reports from the state line officers. In the afternoon, committee chairpersons reported on the mid-year progress of their committees.

Saturday evening was the big event of the conference. Earlier in the day, Patriot's Pen and Youth Essay winners were announced and presented with their awards but at the banquet Saturday night, the Voice of Democracy winners were announced and we listened to their stirring essays on the theme: "What does a veteran mean to me?". Teacher of the Year Awards also were presented at the banquet.

As in past years, at this year's Mid-Winter Conference our delegates learned some new information about our VFW, the status of our state organization, and returned to our post more enthusiastic, motivated and knowledgeable.



The VFW National Representative, Bob Wallace, addresses the conference attendees.

MIA Comrades: Let Us Know How You Are Doing

By Bill Griffith

"Is there a comrade or the family of a comrade in distress?" This question is asked at every post business meeting and usually there is no response, which is a good thing! The problem is that many of our members do not attend the monthly business meetings so we don't know their status.

We are reaching out to these members who can't attend that they can engage without physically attending by tuning into our business meeting web cast. Also, stay up-to-date on post business by reading the post newsletter. Communication goes both ways so we are providing the contact information below: **we urge you to call or write us to let us know if we can help you or just tell us how you are doing.**

Phone number: 206-782-8618, email: quartermaster@vfwseattle.org, web: <http://vfwseattle.org/> and Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/vfwpost3063/>.



Post Honor Guard Participate in Wreaths Across America

By Joe Fitzgerald

Seven members of the Post 3063 Honor Guard participated in the Wreaths Across America (WAA) Memorial Service at Lakeview Cemetery on Saturday, Dec. 16 at 9 a.m. WAA is conducted on National Wreaths Across America Day every December at 1,400 locations throughout the U.S., at sea, and abroad.

It has been sponsored by the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) at that Lakeview Cemetery the past several years. The service starts at Arlington National Cemetery at noon (eastern) and is conducted simultaneously at every national cemetery across the country in addition to any other

cemetery that has servicemen and women buried or interned and wants to participate. Various volunteers from “service type” organizations typically organize this ceremony at the various cemeteries throughout the country with participation of current or past members of the military.

Our connection to this cemetery has been through Comrade Bill Griffith who is a member of the local SAR chapter. He asked us to participate last year, which was Post 3063 Honor Guard’s very first event. We did a three gun salute at a very cold, quick, and simple ceremony.

This year we had enough advanced notice (and more honor guard members) to conduct a larger

ceremony.

It started with a salute to the Colors and the Pledge of Allegiance by the Honor Guard, followed by opening remarks by SAR, and then the Laying of the Wreaths.

A remembrance wreath was laid for members of each branch of the Armed forces, the Merchant Marines, and POW/MIA – a total of seven wreaths.

As each wreath was brought forward and the branch represented was announced, the bearer stepped between two Honor Guards (Bill Griffith and Harold Rodenberger), who then rendered a hand salute as the wreath was laid at the base of the pole flying the American Flag. Each of the seven wreaths was presented in the same way except for a special moment for the POW/MIA.

At the conclusion of the wreath laying, the Honor Guard rifle detail (Anthony Rose, Dan Stokke and Norm Limric) conducted a three-volley rifle salute. Taps was then played by Barry Roberts who is a member of Buglers Across America. Closing remarks by SAR concluded the ceremony.

Color Guard Captain Joe Fitzgerald assisted SAR President Dan Keen with developing the program and called out the various commands throughout the ceremony. Comrade Tiffany Cavin was the honor guard’s photographer.



From left to right: Anthony Rose, Dan Stokke, Norm Limric, Joe Fitzgerald, Harold Rodenberger, and Bill Griffith participate in the Dec. 16 Wreaths Across America Memorial Service at Lakeview Cemetery in Seattle.

Upcoming Events

April 5, 2018, 7 p.m. - VFW Post 3063 Business Meeting. Food is served at 6 p.m. If you plan to attend and have new business to discuss, please submit your agenda item at <https://goo.gl/ww8kk4>.

April 7, 2018, 4 p.m. - District 2 Fundraiser (Luau Theme) at Post 3063. Dinner prepared by Post 6599. Tickets are \$20 and contact the quartermaster at quartermaster@vfwseattle.org for purchase.

April 19, 2018, 6:30 p.m. - VFW Post 3063 Social Dinner. Menu: chips and salsa, tamales, enchiladas, Mexican rice, refried beans and Mango Royale.

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. for business meetings and social dinners. Social dinners are free for members who have birthdays in the same month. Additional events are listed at <http://vfwseattle.org/index.php/resources/event-calendar/>.



Ballard Eagleson VFW Post 3063 is located in the Ballard neighborhood of Seattle at 2812 NW Market St. The office is open Thursdays and Saturdays 1-5 p.m.

We're on the web and Facebook! <http://www.vfwseattle.org> | <https://www.facebook.com/vfwpost3063>



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